

# Sample Questions



(good) experience or study (an educated guess)  
**ed·u·ca·tion** /éjəkáyshən/ n. 1 **a** the act of educating or being educated; system of educating or being educated; system of or stage in education (a classical education). 3 **a** development of character powers. **b** a stage in or aspect of education for you). □□ **ed·u·ca·tion** tionally adv. e

2006

**Reading Word Locator Study**

## Grade 8

## DIRECTIONS

This booklet contains three sections. You will have 25 minutes to complete section 1 and 25 minutes to complete section 2. Section 3 asks questions about you and your family.

You will be asked to respond to three different types of questions. Some of the questions will require you to choose the best answer and fill in the oval for that answer in your booklet.

For other questions, you will be asked to write short answers on the blank lines provided in your booklet. Here is an example of a question that requires you to provide a short answer.

### Example 1

Give an example from the article that shows Mandy was not a quitter.

*One example is that Mandy's mother didn't want her to umpire in public, but Mandy persuaded her mother to let her.*

Also, you may be asked to answer other questions by writing longer, more detailed responses on a full page of blank lines. For example, here is a question that requires you to provide a longer answer.

### Example 2

Explain how Mandy's mother and brother helped Mandy to become the first women umpire.

Mandy's mother helped her by agreeing to let her umpire at a public ball game. Mandy did so well that the team offered her a job as umpire. Mandy's brother helped her by letting her play baseball with him. He also helped Mandy to persuade their mother to let her play in public.

When you are asked to write your response be sure that your handwriting is clear. Think carefully about each question and make your answers as complete as possible, using as many lines as you need.

You may go back to the story, article, or document when answering any of the questions. If you finish before time is called, be sure to read your work again and change anything that you think will make your answers better.



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# SECTION 1

## Section 1

In this section, you will have 25 minutes to read an article and answer 11 questions about it. Mark your answers in your booklet. Fill in only one oval for each question or write your answer on the lines. Please think carefully about your answers. When you are writing your answers, be sure that your handwriting is clear.

Do not go past the STOP sign at the end of the section. If you finish before time is called, you should go over your work again and change anything that you think will make your answers better.

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE AND BEGIN READING NOW.

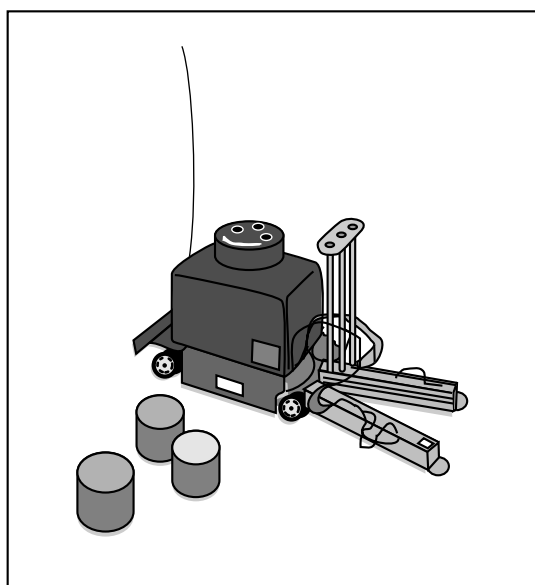
## THE SHAREBOTS

*by Carl Zimmer*

***When robots go to kindergarten in  
Maja Matarić's lab, they learn an important  
lesson about how to get along in robot society.***

No man is an island, and Maja Matarić thinks no robot should be, either. Matarić, a Brandeis University computer scientist, believes robots will do their best work only when they begin to work together. “How do you get a herd of robots to do something without killing each other?” she asks. According to Matarić, you have to put them in societies and let them learn from one another, just as seagulls and baboons and people do. Matarić has already made an impressive start at teaching robots social skills. She has gotten 14 robots to cooperate at once—the biggest gaggle of machines ever to socialize.

The Nerd Herd, as Matarić calls them, are shoe-box-size machines, each of which has four wheels, two tongs to grab things, and a two-way radio. The radio allows them



***MATARIĆ'S  
Nerd Herd,  
with the pucks  
they now pursue  
collectively.***

to triangulate their position with respect to two fixed transmitters as they wander around Matarić's lab. It also allows them to broadcast their coordinates and other information to their neighbors. Infrared sensors help the robots find things and avoid obstacles; contact-sensitive strips tell them when they've crashed anyway.

Each robot is programmed with a handful of what Matarić calls behaviors—sets of instructions that enable the robot to accomplish a small goal, like following the robot in front of it. Set one robot on the floor with its wheels turned permanently to the left and program the others to follow, and they will all drive in a circle until their batteries go dead. But Matarić can get more interesting actions out of the herd by programming them to alternate among several behaviors. By telling them to home in on a target, to aggregate when they're too far from one another, to disperse when they're too crowded, and to avoid collisions at all times, she's been able to get scattered robots to come together and migrate across her lab like a flock of birds.

More important, the robots can also learn on their own to carry out more complex tasks. One task Matarić set for them was to forage for little metal pucks and bring them home to their nest in a corner of the lab. To give the task a natural flavor, Matarić gave the robots clocks; at "night" they had to go home and rest, and in the "morning" they looked for pucks again. In addition to five basic behaviors they could choose from, she endowed them with a sort of prime directive: to maximize their individual point scores. Each time a robot did something right, such as locating a puck, it was automatically rewarded with points; each time it committed a blooper, such as dropping a puck, it lost points.

After some random experimentation, the robots soon learned how to forage—but not very well, because they tended to interfere with one another in their selfish pursuit of points. "Why should you ever stop and let someone else go?" asks Matarić. "It's always in your interest to go—but if everybody feels that way, then

nobody gets through and they jam up and fight for space.” To make her creatures more efficient, though, Matarić found she didn’t have to program them with a God’s-eye view of what was good for all robots. She just had to teach each robot to share—to let other robots know when it had found a puck, and to listen to other robots in return. “I put in the impetus to pay attention to what other robots are doing, and to try what other robots are trying, sharing the experience,” Matarić explains. “If I do something that’s good and if I say, ‘That was really great,’ then you may try it.”

With this simple social contract, the robots needed only 15 minutes of practice to become altruistic. They would magnanimously announce their discovery of pucks, despite having no way of knowing that this was good for the herd as a whole. At times when two robots lunged for a puck, they would stop and go through an “After you!” “No, after you!” routine, but eventually they figured out the proper way to yield. With social graces, the robot herd brought home the pucks twice as fast as without.

Matarić thinks she’ll be able to produce more complex robot societies. “I’m looking at getting specialization in the society so they can say, ‘I’ll do this, and you do that.’ If one of them has a low battery, it may become the messenger that doesn’t actually carry things. And I imagine one robot might emerge as a leader because it happens to be the most efficient. But if it stops being efficient, some other robot will take over.”

Carl Zimmer © 1995 The Walt Disney  
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*Discover Magazine.*

1. The main purpose of the article is to describe how robots can be programmed to

- Ⓐ locate metal pucks
- Ⓑ work with each other
- Ⓒ recharge their own batteries
- Ⓓ perform five basic behaviors

2. Do you think “The Sharebots” is a good title for the article? Explain why or why not, using information from the article.

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3. Based on how the robots in the article are equipped and the behaviors they are programmed to perform, which of the following jobs could they most likely do in someone's home?

Ⓐ Open cans of food

Ⓑ Open doors and cabinets

Ⓒ Pick up shoes on the floor

Ⓓ Move furniture around a room

4. Maja Matarić describes her group of robots as a "herd." Based on what you know about the behavior of animals in herds, do you think this is a good description? Explain your answer by using examples from the article and what you know about herds.

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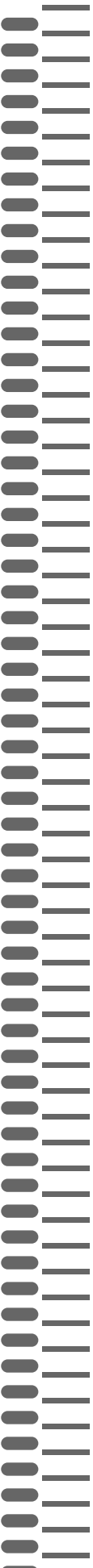
5. The article says that Matarić has programmed the robots to avoid **collisions**. This means that the robots will not

Ⓐ bump into one another

Ⓑ move at high speeds

Ⓒ overheat their engines

Ⓓ send the wrong radio signals



- [illegible]

7. The article says the robots needed only 15 minutes of practice to become **altruistic**. This means that the robots learned quickly to

- Ⓐ find their targets
- Ⓑ send new signals
- Ⓒ help each other
- Ⓓ get the highest score

8. In addition to their five basic behaviors, the article states that “the robots can also learn on their own to carry out more complex tasks.” Describe what it is about these robots that makes it possible for them to learn complex tasks.

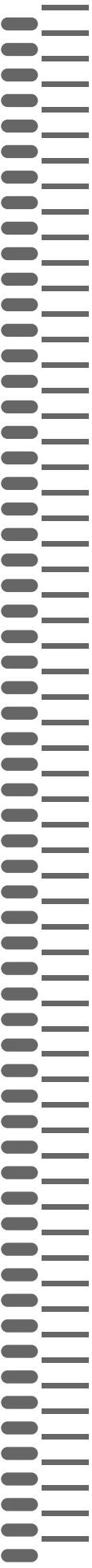
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9. The author of the article writes about the robots and their actions in a way that makes them seem like humans. Describe one way the author does this and explain why or why not it made the article better.

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10. What change occurred when the robots were taught to share?

- ☐ Ⓐ They did their jobs more efficiently.
- ☐ Ⓑ They could accomplish small goals.
- ☐ Ⓒ They performed more specialized tasks.
- ☐ Ⓓ They began following each other in a line.

11. Do you think it is a good idea for Matarić to “produce more complex robot societies”? Support your opinion with information from the article.

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## SECTION 2

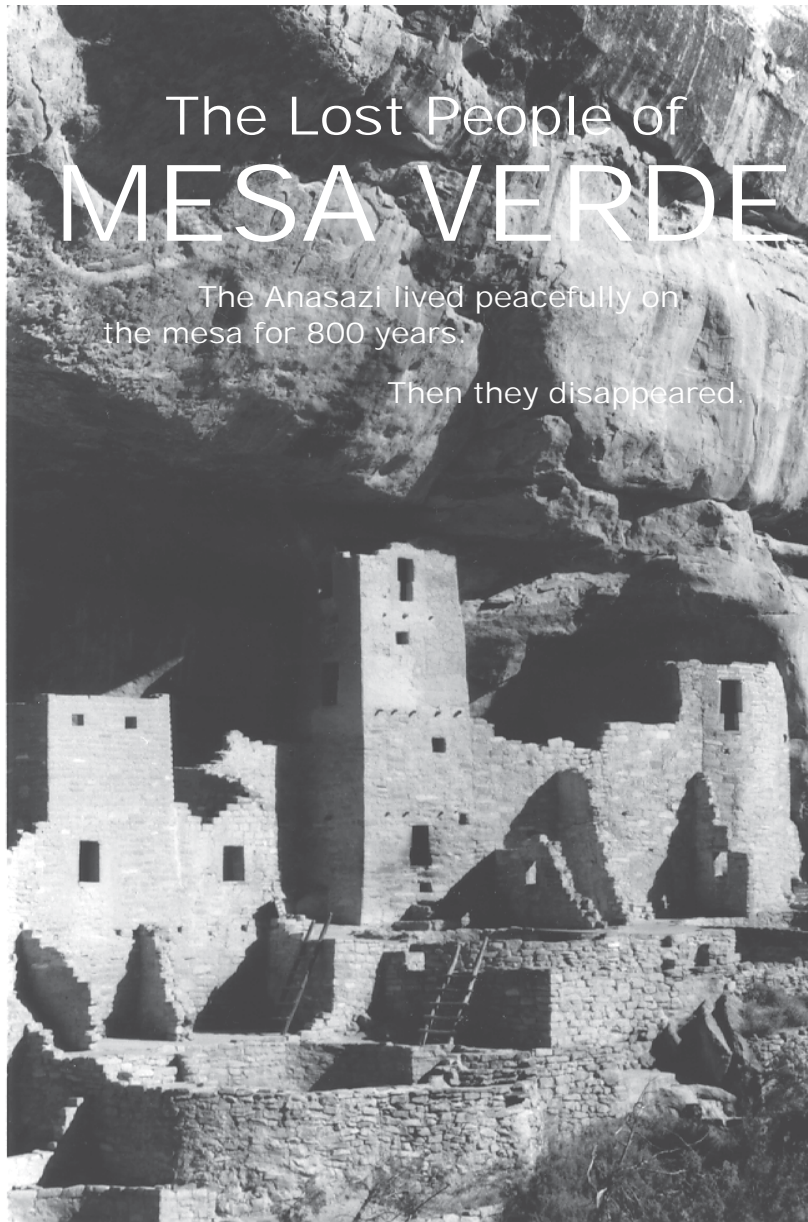
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The Image Bank

*By Elsa Marston*

In the dry land of southwestern Colorado a beautiful plateau rises. It has so many trees that early Spanish explorers called it Mesa Verde, which means "green table." For about eight hundred years Native Americans called the Anasazi lived on this mesa. And then they left. Ever since the cliff houses were first discovered a hundred years ago, scientists and historians have wondered why.

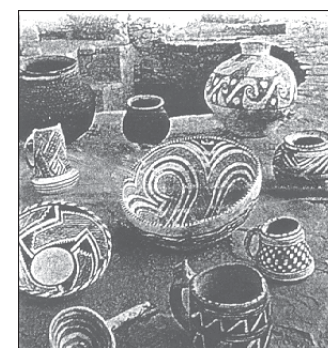
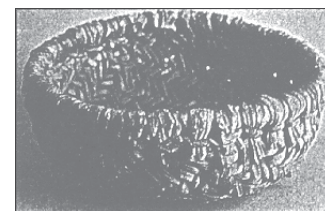
Anasazi is a Navajo word meaning “the ancient ones.” When they first settled there, around 500 A.D., the Anasazi lived in alcoves in the walls of the high canyons. Later they moved to the level land on top, where they built houses of stone and mud mortar. As time passed, they constructed more elaborate houses, like apartment buildings, with several families living close together.

The Anasazi made beautiful pottery, turquoise jewelry, fine sashes of woven hair, and baskets woven tightly enough to hold water. They lived by hunting and by growing corn and squash. Their way of life went on peacefully for several hundred years.

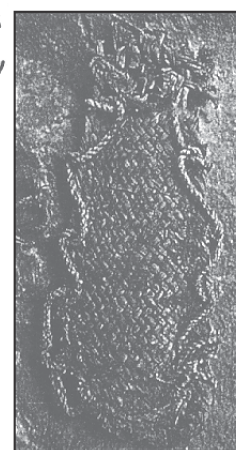
Then around 1200 A.D. something strange happened, for which the reasons are not quite clear. Most of the people moved from the level plateau back down into alcoves in the cliffs. The move must have made their lives difficult because they had to climb back up to the plateau to do the farming. But it seems the Anasazi planned to stay in the canyon walls, for they soon filled the alcoves with amazing cliff dwellings. “Cliff Palace,” the most famous of these, had more than two hundred rooms.

For all the hard work that went into building these new homes, the Anasazi did not live in them long. By 1300 A.D. the cliff dwellings were empty. Mesa Verde was deserted and remained a ghost country for almost six hundred years. Were the people driven out of their homes by enemies? No sign of attack or fighting, or even the presence of other tribes, has been found.

Archaeologists who have studied the place now believe there are other reasons. Mesa Verde, the beautiful green table, was no longer a good place to live. For one thing, in the second half of the thirteenth century there were long periods of cold, and very little rain fell—or else it came at the wrong time of year. Scientists know this from examining the wood used in the cliff dwellings. The growth rings in trees show good and bad growing seasons. But the people



The sturdy baskets, woven sandals, and beautiful pottery left behind by the Anasazi may be 1,000 years old.



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Anasazi Heritage Center Collections

had survived drought and bad weather before, so there must have been another reason.

As the population grew, more land on the mesa top had to be farmed in order to feed the people. That meant that trees had to be cut to clear the land and also to use for houses and fuel. Without the forests, the rain began to wash away the mesa top.

How do we know about erosion problems that happened about eight hundred years ago? The Anasazi built many low dams across the smaller valleys on the mesa to slow down rain runoff. Even so, good soil washed away, and the people could no longer raise enough food. As the forests dwindled, the animals, already over-hunted, left the mesa for mountainous areas with more trees.

And as the mesa “wore out,” so did the people. It appears that the Anasazi were not healthy. Scientists can learn a lot about ancient people’s health by studying the bones and teeth found in burials. The mesa dwellers had arthritis, and their teeth were worn down by the grit in corn meal, a main part of their diet.

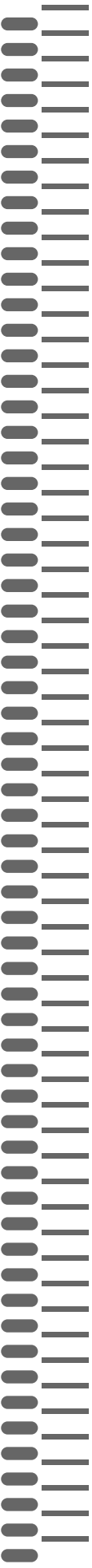
As food became scarce, people grew weaker. Not many lived beyond their twenties. Women died very young, and few babies survived. Living so close together in the cliff houses, where everyone was hungry and worried, the people must have suffered from emotional strain. They probably quarreled often.

In the end the Anasazi must have given up hope that things would get better. Families packed up and went away. Of course, the “ancient ones” did not simply disappear. They moved southeast to another area and mingled with other peoples. After a while their heritage as the people of the Mesa Verde was forgotten.

In time the trees grew back and the plateau became green once more. But, for the Anasazi it was too late. Although they respected nature and tried to farm wisely, land that was used too hard could not support them forever.

Yet in their cliff houses and crafts the “ancient ones” left us a superb monument. It is truly one of the most fascinating pictures of America’s past.

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1. When the article says that the Anasazi lived in more **elaborate** houses, this means that the houses
  - Ⓐ had better construction
  - Ⓑ were more complicated
  - Ⓒ covered a large area
  - Ⓓ were more colorful
  
2. The article says that Mesa Verde was **deserted** by 1300 A.D. This means that
  - Ⓐ the weather in Mesa Verde was hot and dry
  - Ⓑ the buildings were destroyed by storms
  - Ⓒ the Anasazi stopped fighting wars
  - Ⓓ the Anasazi left the area around Mesa Verde
  
3. When the article says that after 1300 A.D. food became **scarce** for the Anasazi, this means that
  - Ⓐ people often got sick from eating the food
  - Ⓑ ways of preparing the food changed
  - Ⓒ not much food was available
  - Ⓓ people started eating different foods

4. The article says that after the mesa “wore out,” the Anasazi people probably **quarreled** often. This means that they
- Ⓐ argued a lot with each other
  - Ⓑ asked many questions
  - Ⓒ worried about money
  - Ⓓ took many short trips
5. The article says that the **heritage** of the people of Mesa Verde was forgotten. This refers to the
- Ⓐ ruins of buildings at Mesa Verde
  - Ⓑ geographic location of Mesa Verde
  - Ⓒ role of women in Anasazi society
  - Ⓓ Anasazi’s traditional way of doing things



## SECTION 2

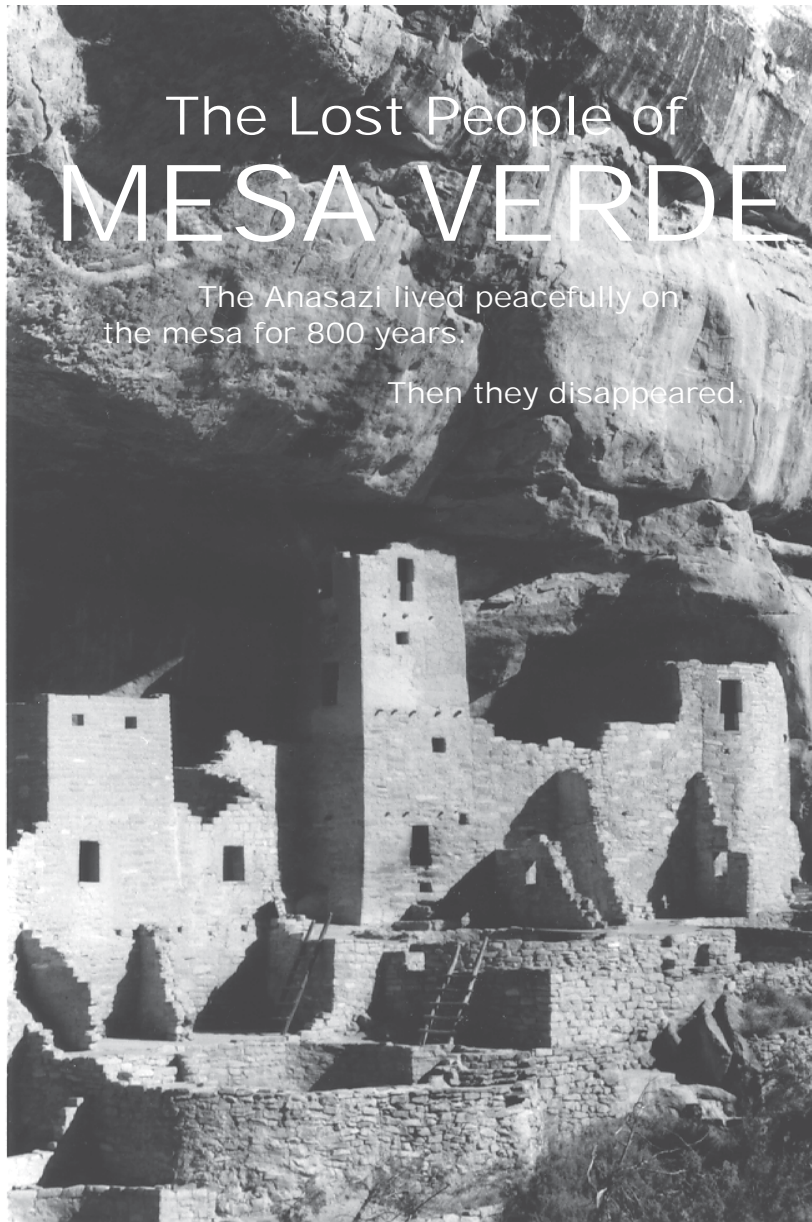
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The Image Bank

By Elsa Marston

Line

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Line

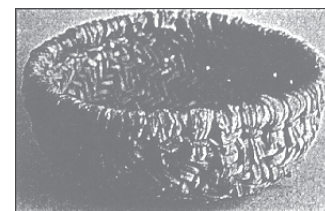
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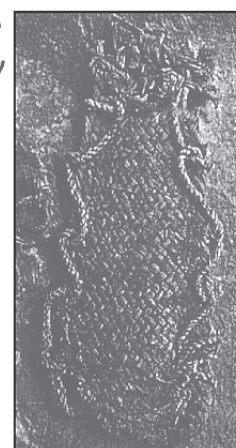
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For all the hard work that went into building these new homes, the Anasazi did not live in them long. By 1300 A.D. the cliff dwellings were empty. Mesa Verde was deserted and remained a ghost country for almost six hundred years. Were the people driven out of their homes by enemies? No sign of attack or fighting, or even the presence of other tribes, has been found.

Archaeologists who have studied the place now believe there are other reasons. Mesa Verde, the beautiful green table, was no longer a good place to live. For one thing, in the second half of the thirteenth century there were long periods of cold, and very little rain fell—or else it came at the wrong time of year. Scientists know this from examining the wood used in the cliff dwellings. The growth rings in trees show good and bad growing seasons. But the people



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*Line*

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50 As the population grew, more land on the mesa top had to be farmed in order to feed the people. That meant that trees had to be cut to clear the land and also to use for houses and fuel. Without the forests, the rain began to wash away the mesa top.

55 How do we know about erosion problems that happened about eight hundred years ago? The Anasazi built many low dams across the smaller valleys on the mesa to slow down rain runoff. Even so, good soil washed away, and the people could no longer raise enough food. As the forests dwindled, the animals, already over-hunted, left the mesa for mountainous areas with more trees.

60 And as the mesa “wore out,” so did the people. It appears that the Anasazi were not healthy. Scientists can learn a lot about ancient people’s health by studying the bones and teeth found in burials. The mesa dwellers had arthritis, and their teeth were worn down by the grit in corn meal, a main part of  
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As food became scarce, people grew weaker. Not many lived beyond their twenties. Women died very young, and few babies survived. Living so close together in the cliff houses, where everyone was hungry and worried, the people must have  
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1. In line 13, when the article says that the Anasazi lived in more **elaborate** houses, this means that the houses
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2. In line 34, the article says that Mesa Verde was **deserted** by 1300 A.D. This means that
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- Ⓐ argued a lot with each other
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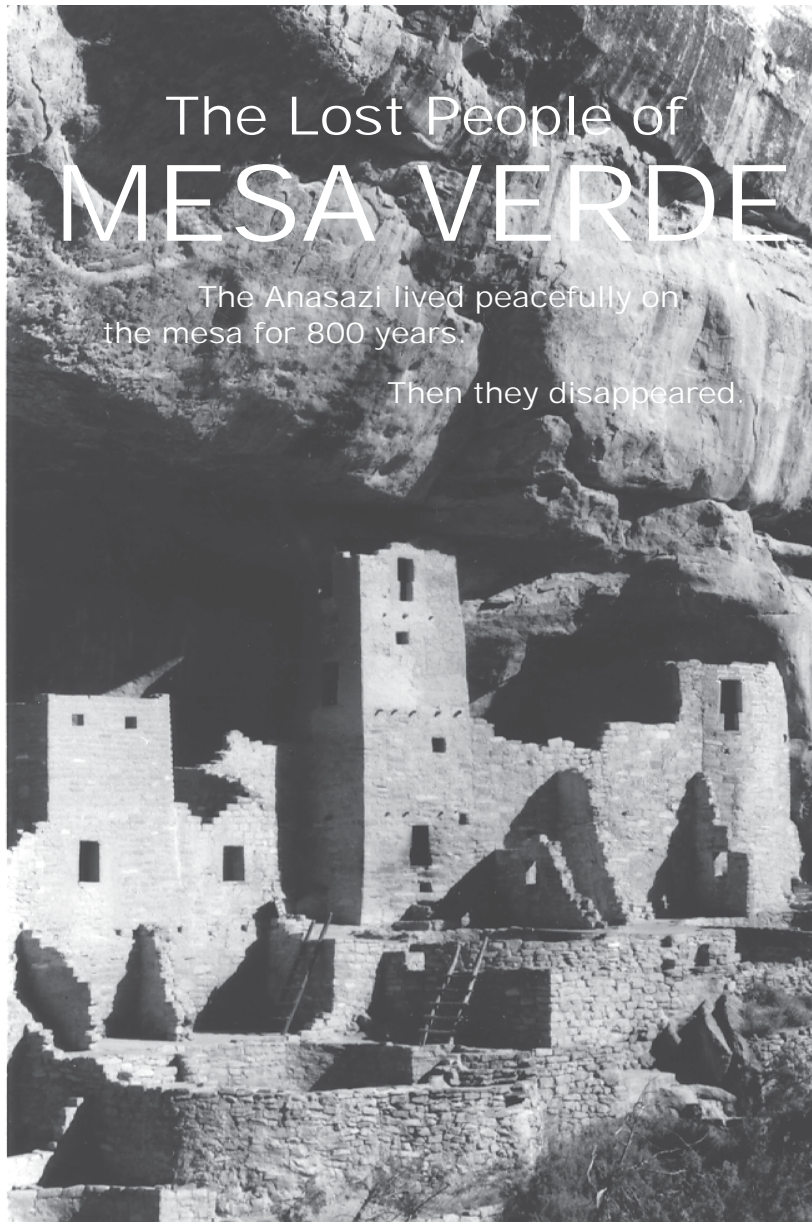
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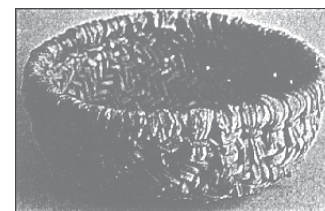
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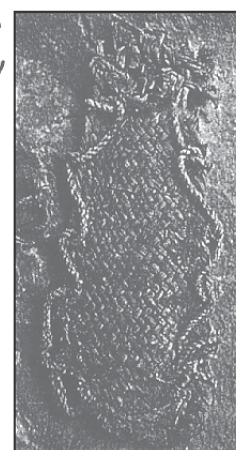
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  - Ⓓ were more colorful
  
2. The article says that Mesa Verde was **deserted** by 1300 A.D. This means that
  - Ⓐ the weather in Mesa Verde was hot and dry
  - Ⓑ the buildings were destroyed by storms
  - Ⓒ the Anasazi stopped fighting wars
  - Ⓓ the Anasazi left the area around Mesa Verde
  
3. When the article says that after 1300 A.D. food became **scarce** for the Anasazi, this means that
  - Ⓐ people often got sick from eating the food
  - Ⓑ ways of preparing the food changed
  - Ⓒ not much food was available
  - Ⓓ people started eating different foods

4. The article says that after the mesa “wore out,” the Anasazi people probably **quarreled** often. This means that they
- Ⓐ argued a lot with each other
  - Ⓑ asked many questions
  - Ⓒ worried about money
  - Ⓓ took many short trips
5. The article says that the **heritage** of the people of Mesa Verde was forgotten. This refers to the
- Ⓐ ruins of buildings at Mesa Verde
  - Ⓑ geographic location of Mesa Verde
  - Ⓒ role of women in Anasazi society
  - Ⓓ Anasazi’s traditional way of doing things



## DIRECTIONS

In the next section, you will be asked questions about yourself and your family. Fill in the oval for the best answer.

### Example

Which event would you prefer to attend?

- Ⓐ basketball game
- Ⓑ car show
- Ⓒ concert
- Ⓓ play

Make your answer mark clear and dark in the oval. If you make a mistake or want to change your answer, be sure to completely erase any unwanted marks.

Do not go past the  sign at the end of each section until you are told to do so.

If you finish before time is called, go back and check your work on that section only. Use your time carefully. Do as much as you can in each section.



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## SECTION 3

### Section 3

In this section, please tell us about yourself and your family. The section has 13 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet.

VB331330

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino? Fill in **one** or **more ovals**.

- ☐ (A) No, I am not Hispanic or Latino.
- ☐ (B) Yes, I am Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano.
- ☐ (C) Yes, I am Puerto Rican or Puerto Rican American.
- ☐ (D) Yes, I am Cuban or Cuban American.
- ☐ (E) Yes, I am from some other Hispanic or Latino background.

VB331331

2. Which of the following best describes you? Fill in **one or more ovals**.

- ☐ (A) White
- ☐ (B) Black or African American
- ☐ (C) Asian
- ☐ (D) American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ (E) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

### Section 3

For the rest of the questions in this section, fill in only **one** oval for each question.

VB331333

3. Does your family get a newspaper at least four times a week?

- ☐ (A) Yes
- ☐ (B) No
- ☐ (C) I don't know.

VB331334

4. Does your family get any magazines regularly?

- ☐ (A) Yes
- ☐ (B) No
- ☐ (C) I don't know.

VB331335

5. About how many books are there in your home?

- ☐ (A) Few (0–10)
- ☐ (B) Enough to fill one shelf (11–25)
- ☐ (C) Enough to fill one bookcase (26–100)
- ☐ (D) Enough to fill several bookcases (more than 100)

VB331336

6. Is there a computer at home that you use?

- ☐ (A) Yes
- ☐ (B) No

VB331337

7. Is there an encyclopedia in your home? It could be a set of books, or it could be on the computer.

- ☐ (A) Yes
- ☐ (B) No
- ☐ (C) I don't know.

TB001101

8. About how many pages a day do you have to read in school and for homework?

- ☐ (A) 5 or fewer
- ☐ (B) 6–10
- ☐ (C) 11–15
- ☐ (D) 16–20
- ☐ (E) More than 20

VB331339

9. How often do you talk about things you have studied in school with someone in your family?

- ☐ (A) Never or hardly ever
- ☐ (B) Once every few weeks
- ☐ (C) About once a week
- ☐ (D) Two or three times a week
- ☐ (E) Every day

VB331447

10. How many days were you absent from school in the last month?

- Ⓐ None
- Ⓑ 1 or 2 days
- Ⓒ 3 or 4 days
- Ⓓ 5 to 10 days
- Ⓔ More than 10 days

VB331451

13. How often do people in your home talk to each other in a language other than English?

- Ⓐ Never
- Ⓑ Once in a while
- Ⓒ About half of the time
- Ⓓ All or most of the time

VB330870

11. How far in school did your mother go?

- Ⓐ She did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ She graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ She had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ She graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

VB330871

12. How far in school did your father go?

- Ⓐ He did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ He graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ He had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ He graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

